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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 0571

C O N F I D E N T I A L YEREVAN 000167

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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/CARC, EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [AJ](#) [TU](#) [AM](#)  
SUBJECT: ARMENIA INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT "FALSE" PKK  
REPORTS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) During a February 21 meeting with CDA, FM Oskanian expressed increasing GOAM concerns about reports alleging the expansion into Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh of militant cells from Turkey's Kurdistan Worker's Party (PKK). He asked that Washington help "put an end" to such reports, which he adamantly contended were "all false." Oskanian declared that the issue has now become "serious" for Armenia, particularly in light of press reports that the issue was discussed in recently held security talks in Baku with S/CT Principal Deputy Coordinator Urbancic. (NOTE: Oskanian gave CDA a copy of a recent AFP report which referenced the meeting, entitled "Azerbaijan: Washington, Baku Concerned About PKK Cells in Caucasus." The report includes comments attributed to a US official confirming that the issue was discussed, and that Washington is indeed concerned about a growing PKK presence in the Caucasus. END NOTE.)

12. (C) Oskanian called the false reports -- which he said first appeared in Azerbaijani, Turkish, and Israeli media -- "pretty dangerous," and wondered aloud "where they are headed." He alleged that a recent piece on CNN-Turk presented these false reports as facts. He stated that US silence on the issue was helping the reports gain currency. He also said the Foreign Ministry was trying to contact Israel's Ambassador accredited to Armenia to protest the reports. Oskanian said the GOAM was also concerned that this non-issue could figure in upcoming US-Azerbaijan bilateral meetings. CDA acknowledged seeing these reports, and told Oskanian he would pass on GOAM concerns to Washington.  
PENNINGTON